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Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
Third session
19-30 March 2001

Report of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-fourth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/54 V of 15 December 1999, the operative part of which reads as follows:

"*The General Assembly*,

"...

"1. *Decides* to convene the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in June/July 2001;

"2. *Also decides* that the scope of the Conference shall be the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects;

"3. *Further decides* to establish a preparatory committee open to participation by all States, which will hold no fewer than three sessions, the first session to be held in New York from 28 February to 3 March 2000;

"4. *Decides* that the specialized agencies, other relevant intergovernmental organizations and relevant entities, having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and in the work of the General Assembly, shall participate, as observers, in the Preparatory Committee, and requests the Committee to take a decision on the modalities of attendance of non-governmental organizations at its sessions;

"5. *Requests* the Preparatory Committee to decide, at its first session, on the date and venue of the Conference in 2001 as well as on the dates and venue of its subsequent sessions;

"6. *Stresses* the need to ensure the widest possible and effective participation in the Conference in 2001;

"7. *Requests* the Preparatory Committee to make recommendations to the Conference on all relevant matters, including the objective, a draft agenda, draft rules of procedure and draft final documents, which will include a programme of action, and to decide on background documents to be made available in advance;

"8. *Invites* all Member States, in particular those that have not yet done so, in response to the note verbale of the Secretary-General dated 20 January 1999, to communicate to the Secretary-General their views on the agenda and other relevant questions relating to the Conference;

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"9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit the replies of Member States relevant to paragraph 8 above to the Preparatory Committee and to render the Preparatory Committee and the Conference all necessary assistance, including the provision of essential background information, relevant documents and summary records;

"10. *Endorses* the report of the Secretary-General on small arms (A/54/258), prepared with the assistance of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/38 J, bearing in mind the views of Member States on the report;

"11. *Calls upon* all Member States to implement the relevant recommendations contained in section IV of that report to the extent possible and where necessary in cooperation with appropriate international and regional organizations and/or through international and regional cooperation;

"12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the report as well as on the implementation of the relevant recommendations contained therein;

"13. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to implement the relevant recommendations contained in section IV of the report within available financial resources and with any other assistance provided by the States in a position to do so and in cooperation with appropriate international and regional organizations where necessary;

"14. *Further requests* the Secretary-General, in order to assist in preventing the illicit trafficking in and illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons:

"(a) To carry out a study, within available financial resources and with any other assistance provided by Member States in a position to do so, and with the assistance of governmental experts appointed by him, on the basis of equitable geographical representation, while seeking the views of Member States, on the feasibility of restricting the manufacture and trade of such weapons to the manufacturers and dealers authorized by States, which will cover the brokering activities, particularly illicit activities, relating to small arms and light weapons, including transportation agents and financial transactions;

"(b) To submit the study as one of the background documents for the Conference to be held in 2001;

"15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fifth session the item entitled 'Small arms'."

2. By its decision 55/415, entitled "Small arms", adopted on 20 November 2000, the General Assembly decided to convene the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in New York, from 9 to 20 July 2001. It also decided to convene the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference in New York, from 19 to 30 March 2001.

3. Representatives of the following States participated in the third session of the Preparatory Committee: Algeria, Andorra, Angola Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the

former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tonga, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

4. The following intergovernmental organizations and relevant entities participated as observers in the third session of the Preparatory Committee: European Community, Permanent Observer of the International Organization of la Francophonie, Permanent Observer of the Organization of African Unity, International Committee of the Red Cross and World Bank.

II. Organization of the work of the Preparatory Committee

5. Pursuant to General Assembly decision 55/415, the Preparatory Committee for the Conference held its third session at United Nations Headquarters in New York, from 19 to 30 March 2001.

6. During the third session, the Preparatory Committee held a total of 10 plenary meetings.

7. The following officers served the Preparatory Committee at the third session:

Chairman

Mr. Carlos dos Santos	Mozambique

Vice-Chairpersons

Mr. Yashar Aliyev	Azerbaijan
Ms. Marie-France André	Belgium
Mr. Herbert Calhoun	United States of America
Mr. Alioune Diagne	Senegal
Ms. Dace Dobraja	Latvia
Mr. Mitsuro Donowaki	Japan
Ms. Ana Maria Sampaio Fernandes	Brazil
Mr. Shen Guofang	China
Mr. Samuel Insanally	Guyana
Mr. Ismail Khairat	Egypt
Mr. Valeri P. Kuchynski	Ukraine
Mr. Bob Jalango	Kenya
Mr. Leif Arne Ulland	Norway
Mr. Robert McDougall	Canada
Mr. Hamid Baeidi Nejab	(Iran) Islamic Republic of
Mr. Richard Pierce	Jamaica
Mr. Jean Du Preez	South Africa
Mr. Denis Dangue Rewaka	Gabon
Mr. Henrik Salander	Sweden
Mr. Raul Salazar-Cosio	Peru
Mr. Carlos Sorreta	Philippines
Mr. Sergey Ling	Belarus
Ms. Nury Vargas	Costa Rica
Mr. Makmur Widodo	Indonesia
Mr. Przemyslaw Wyganowski	Poland

8. Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, Senior Political Affairs Officer, Department for Disarmament Affairs, served as Secretary of the Preparatory Committee. As in the previous two sessions, the Secretary of the Preparatory Committee acted as Rapporteur.

9. At its 28th meeting, on 19 March 2001, the Committee considered the timetable submitted by the Chair for the week of 19-23 March 2001, as contained in Informal Paper No. 1 of 19 March 2001. At the 36th meeting, on 26 March, the Committee considered the timetable submitted by the Chair for the week of 26-30 March 2001, as contained in Informal Paper No. 4 of 26 March 2001. The Committee adopted the two working timetables and decided to focus its work on the consideration of the Chairman's working paper entitled "Draft Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects" (A/CONF.192/PC/L.4/Rev.1). During plenary meetings, delegations made general statements and presented proposals on the Chairman's working paper. The Committee considered the working paper paragraph by paragraph in closed meetings. Amendments and additional proposals to the working paper were also considered.

10. The Preparatory Committee also agreed that the Chairman's working paper would be the basis for its substantive consideration of the draft Programme of Action.

11. At the 28th meeting, on 19 March, at the request of the Preparatory Committee, the representatives of the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention, Vienna, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) made statements respectively on the recent conclusion of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations

Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the Southern African Development Community Declaration Concerning Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Material.

12. At the same meeting, the Chairperson of the Group of Experts established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/54 V, Ms. Peggy Mason of Canada, presented the report of the Group (A/CONF.192/PC/33).

13. At the 29th meeting, also on 19 March, at the request of the Preparatory Committee, representatives of the following United Nations departments, agencies, programmes and funds made statements: Department for Disarmament Affairs, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department for Peace-keeping Operations.

14. At the 34th meeting, on 23 March, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Kenya, Mr. Bonaya Adhi Godana, addressed the Committee on behalf of the Initiative of the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa.

15. At the same meeting, the Officer-in-Charge of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Evgeniy Gorkovskiy, made a statement on behalf of the United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism.

16. Also at the 34th meeting, representatives of the following non-governmental organizations addressed the Committee: International League for Peace and Freedom, Institute for Security Studies, Amnesty International, Saferworld, National Rifle Association, Groupe de Recherche sur la Paix et la Sécurité, International Alert, Working Group on Weapons Reduction, Christian Council of Mozambique, Security Research and Information Centre, International Action Network on Small Arms, Eminent Persons Group, Sporting Shooters Association of Australia, Centre for International Policy, Africa Peace Forum, Bradford University and Arias Foundation.

17. At the 36th meeting, on 26 March, a representative of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict made a statement.

18. A number of delegations circulated the following documents:

- Letter dated 30 January 2001, from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs (A/CONF.192/PC/31);
- Note verbale dated 2 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations transmitting, on behalf of the European Union, EU comments on the Chairman's revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/32);
- Note Verbale dated 15 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretariat of the United Nations, transmitting the general comments of Japan on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/34);
- Letter dated 16 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, transmitting the text of the Declaration concerning Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials in the Southern African Development Community (A/CONF.192/PC/35);
- Note verbale dated 19 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting working views and suggestions of the Bulgarian delegation on regional and subregional activities (A/CONF.192/PC/37);
- Note verbale dated 21 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of France and the Permanent Observer Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting a summary of the Franco-Swiss Seminar on the Traceability of Small Arms and Light Weapons, held in Geneva on 12 and 13 March 2001 (A/CONF.192/PC/38);
- Note verbale dated 28 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United

Nations addressed to the secretariat of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting, on behalf of the European Union, drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/40);

- Letter dated 29 March 2001 from the head of the Canadian delegation addressed to the secretariat of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/41);
- Note verbale dated 30 March 2001 from the Permanent Observer Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the secretariat of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting working papers on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/42);
- Note verbale dated 30 March 2001 from the Permanent Observer Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the secretariat of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting, on behalf of Mexico, Switzerland and the United States of America, a working paper on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/43);
- Note verbale dated 30 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, transmitting, on behalf of the League of Arab States, drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/44);
- Note verbale dated 30 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the secretariat of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action. (A/CONF.192/PC/45);
- Note verbale dated 30 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/46);
- Note verbale dated 3 April 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the secretariat of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/47);
- Note verbale dated 30 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Algeria to the United Nations addressed to the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/48);
- Note verbale dated 2 April 2001 from the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations addressed to the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/49);
- Note verbale dated 30 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/51);
- Note verbale dated 3 April 2001 from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/52);
- Note verbale dated 26 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/53);
- Note verbale dated 2 April 2001 from the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations addressed to the secretariat of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/54);
- Note verbale dated 2 April 2001 from the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the secretariat of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/55);

- Note verbale dated 3 April 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Nepal to the United Nations addressed to the secretariat of the Preparatory Committee, transmitting drafting proposals on the revised draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/PC/56);
- Recommendation proposed by Brazil, Mali, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (A/CONF.192/PC/57).

19. The Preparatory Committee had before it the following documents for its consideration:

- Draft provisional agenda of the Conference (A/CONF.192/PC/L.2/Rev.2);
- Draft decision on the modalities of attendance of non-governmental organizations at the sessions of the Preparatory Committee as well as the Conference (A/CONF.192/PC/L.7/Rev.2);
- Draft rule 33 of the draft rules of procedure for the Conference (A/CONF.192/PC/L.8);
- Draft decision (A/CONF.192/PC/L.9);
- Draft rule 64 of the draft rules of procedure of the Conference (A/CONF.192/PC/L.10);
- Draft report of the Preparatory Committee (A/CONF.192/PC/L.12);
- Draft decision proposed by the Netherlands (on behalf of Brazil, Mali, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) (A/CONF.192/PC/L.13).

20. A number of documents were made available at the third session of the Preparatory Committee. The list of documents is contained in Information Paper No. 1 of 28 March 2001.

21. The list of delegations participating in the third session of the Preparatory Committee is contained in document A/CONF.192/PC/36.

22. Pursuant to the decision of the General Assembly of 15 December 1999 that summary records would be provided for only those meetings at which decisions were taken, summary records were provided for three meetings: the 33rd, 37th and 38th meetings.

III. Decisions and recommendations of the Preparatory Committee

A. Decisions

23. At the 33rd meeting, on 21 March 2001, in accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 54/54 V, the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision on modalities of attendance of non-governmental organizations at its session and at the Conference (A/CONF.192/PC/L.7/Rev.2). Before the adoption of the decision, the Chairman stated, for the record, that it was the Committee's understanding that, once non-governmental organizations enjoying consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in accordance with the provisions of Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996 have informed the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee of their interest in participating in the Committee, they would have a right to participate in its session without being subjected to a second screening. In addition, the Chairman also stated that it was the Committee's understanding that the language contained in the decision would apply mutatis mutandis to the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and that the language would be reflected in draft rule 64 of the draft rules of procedure of the Conference.

24. In accordance with paragraph 7 of the resolution, 54/54 V, the Preparatory Committee also decided that the Secretary-General's study carried out with the assistance of a group of governmental experts established pursuant to paragraph 14 of the resolution (A/CONF.192/PC/33) should be made available in advance. The Committee furthermore decided that those documents and papers made available to it, throughout the preparatory process, including the reports of its first, second and third sessions (A/CONF.192/PC/9, A/CONF.192/PC/30 and A/CONF.192/PC/50), would constitute background documents for the Conference.

B. Recommendations

25. At the 38th meeting on 30 March 2001, the Preparatory Committee adopted a recommendation proposed by Brazil, Mali, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

(A/CONF.192/PC/57). The recommendation reads as follows:

> "The Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which will be held at United Nations Headquarters from 9 to 20 July 2001,
>
> 1. *Recommends* that the first day of the Conference be proclaimed 'Small Arms Destruction Day';
>
> 2. *Calls upon* all States to organize, on a voluntary basis and, where possible, together with non-governmental organizations and civil society, public events of destruction of small arms and light weapons on 'Small Arms Destruction Day', and to ensure the widest possible dissemination of information about the events, including through national and international media;
>
> 3. *Requests* the Secretary-General of the United Nations to communicate this recommendation to all States and other participants in the meetings of the Preparatory Committee, including non-governmental organizations."

26. In accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 54/54 V, at the 38th meeting, the Committee recommended to the Conference the objective of the Conference, as contained in document A/CONF. 192/PC/L.3, for further consideration.

27. In accordance with the same paragraph, the Committee recommended to the Conference the draft agenda of the Conference, as adopted by the Committee at its second session (A/CONF.192/PC/L.2/Rev.2).

28. Also at the 38th meeting, the Committee recommended to the Conference that draft rule 64 on the modalities of attendance of non-governmental organizations at the Conference should be incorporated in the draft rules of procedure of the Conference (A/CONF.192/PC/L.5).

29. In accordance with the same paragraph, also at the 38th meeting, the Preparatory Committee recommended to the Conference the draft rules of procedure of the Conference (A/CONF. 192/PC/L.5), as amended by the insertion of draft rule 33 on decision-making, adopted by the Committee at its second session (A/CONF.192/PC/L.8), and of draft rule 64 (A/CONF.192/PC/L.10).

30. Moreover, at its 38th meeting, the Preparatory Committee recommended that the Chairman's working paper entitled "Draft Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects", (A/CONF.192/PC/L.4/Rev.1), should be forwarded for further consideration at the Conference. The Committee also welcomed the intention of the Chairman to produce, under his own authority, an informal information sheet on the status of the discussions at the end of the third session of the Preparatory Committee.

31. At the same meeting, the Committee also recommended that the Conference should be held at the ministerial level (A/CONF.192/PC/L9).

32. At the same meeting, the Preparatory Committee recommended that the duration of each statement made during the general debate of the Conference should be limited to seven minutes.

33. The Preparatory Committee concluded its third session on 30 March 2001.